

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the most recent Office Action, claims 1-20 were examined. Claims 1-20 are rejected. Claim 12 is canceled. Claims 1, 4-7, 9-11 and 13-20 are amended. Accordingly, claims 1-11 and 13-20 are pending in the present application. No new matter is added.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough search and examination of the present application, and respond to the comments in the Office Action as follows.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102

The Office Action states that claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Anuff et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,327,628). In particular, the Office Action states that the disclosure by Anuff et al. teaches each and every element recited in claims 1-20. Claim 12 is canceled, thereby rendering the rejection with respect to that claim moot. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of the remaining claims.

The disclosure by Anuff et al. is directed to a portal that provides a customizable user interface for accessing a computer network. That is, Anuff et al. describes how to customize the display presented to a user of a portal engine (col. 3, line 1 – col. 4, line 14). Anuff et al. fail to disclose any discussion of access granted to particular services or applications based on membership in a user group or specifics of a user profile. These limitations are clearly recited in claims 1-11 and 13-20. That is, while Anuff et al. appear to describe a customizable presentation, there is no discussion whatsoever related to selective access to services or applications based on membership in a user group, or the definitions in a user profile, as recited in claims 1-11 and 13-20.

The disclosure by Anuff et al. appears to describe templates and user group membership, but these are only for the purpose of the style or presentation provided to the user (col. 15, line 6 – line 67). Accordingly, the disclosure by Anuff et al. fails to teach the use of user groups and user profiles, and their interaction, to permit or prevent user access to services or applications available in a portal service. Claims 1-11 and 13-20 recite elements and limitations describing the invention and how access to services or applications is limited by a user being included in a group, and the use of a user profile to modify the format in which access is maintained.

In accordance with the present invention, access is simply modified for each user based on membership in a group, with presentation and access format information provided in a user profile. If a service or application is updated, the update and connection is transparent to the user because it is maintained on a service or application interface level. The user is also able to authenticate to services and applications by logging in once and having authentication information selectively applied through settings in the user profile, the user group or the portal directory service. Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would not arrive at the present invention recited in claims 1-11 and 13-20 based on the disclosure by Anuff et al. and the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1-11 and 13-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) in view of the disclosure by Anuff et al. is overcome, and respectfully requests that it be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and discussion, Applicants respectfully believe that the application is now in condition for allowance, and earnestly solicit notice to that effect. If it is believed that an interview would contribute to progress in the application, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned counsel at the number provided below.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, on December 15, 2003:

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Name of applicant, assignee or
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Signature

December 15, 2003

Date of Signature

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Respectfully submitted,

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